

Clarence Moore House (Canadian Chancery)
1746 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D. C.

HABS No. DC-267

HABS

WASH.

210 -

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
CLARENCE MOORE HOUSE
(CANADIAN CHANCERY)

HABS No. DC-267

WASH, 210 -

Location: 1746 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C.;
on the south side of Massachusetts Avenue between
17th and 18th Streets. UTM: 18.322320.4308360.

Present Owner: Canada

Present Occupant: Canada

Present Use: Chancery

Statement of Significance: Originally a private residence, this structure was designed in the Louis XV manner and, as built, was one of the largest and most costly on the avenue. The simple, logical progression of interior spaces and the sequence of their stylistic changes exhibit a quality in both design and craftsmanship. Special attention is drawn to the particularly fine wood carving, plaster and iron work, and the remarkable hardware and lighting fixtures used throughout. [Floors as in HABS D.C. Catalog.]

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Lot and Square:

The building is located in Square 158, original lot 17. Parts of original lots 15 and 16, Square 158 are also included in the property.

B. Original and Subsequent Owners:

The following chain of title to the property shows the owners of the present structure and of any known preceding structures on the site:

1901 Deed July 5, 1901, recorded July 16, 1901 in
Liber 2561 folio 257

Edward J. Stellwagen et ux et al.
To
Mabelle Swift Moore

"This Deed...Witnesseth that Edward J. Stellwagen and Charlotte M. Stellwagen his wife and said Edward J. Stellwagen as Trustee under a certain Deed in trust from Francis G. Newlands and others, dated January 16th, 1901 and duly recorded in Liber No. 2569 folio 18 et seq. of the Land Records of the District of Columbia, parties hereto of the first part, for and in consideration of Thirty-seven thou-

sand, four hundred and twenty-two dollars...to them paid by Mabelle Swift Moore, of said District of Columbia, party hereto of the second part...convey...All of Original Lot... (17) in Square...(158)..."

1907 Deed August 1, 1907, recorded September 30, 1907 in Liber 3099 folio 293

Arthur Herbert et al., Trustees
To
Mabelle Swift Moore

"This Deed made...by and between Arthur Herbert, Julian T. Burke and Richard D. Roszelle, Trustees under the last Will and Testament of H. Grafton Dulany, deceased, by virtue of a Deed to them from Guy Fairfax Whiting and others, recorded November 1, 1892 in Liber No. 1752 folio 9 of the Land Records of the District of Columbia; - parties hereto of the first part, and Mabelle Swift Moore, of the District of Columbia, party hereto of the second part...for and in consideration of the sum of Ten thousand Dollars...Parts of Original Lots Fifteen (15) and Sixteen (16) in Square... (158), contained within the following metes and bounds; ...Beginning for the same on the Easterly line of said Lot ... (16), at a point distant...120 feet from Massachusetts Avenue, and running thence in a Southwesterly direction on said Easterly line,...42 feet to the southeast corner of said Lot...(16); thence west...62 feet to the southwest corner of said Lot...(16); thence north...63 feet to the northeast corner of original Lot...(14) in said Square; thence in a northwesterly direction to the southeast corner of the...10 feet wide alley...;thence in a northeasterly direction along the rear of said alley,...10 feet; and thence in a southeasterly direction...190.14 feet, more or less, to the point of beginning..."

1927 Deed May 28, 1927, recorded June 2, 1927 in Liber 6093 folio 357

Mabelle Swift Wichfeld
To
His Majesty George V

"This Deed...between Mabelle Swift Wichfeld (formerly Moore)...and His Majesty George V, in Right of Canada, represented herein by the Minister of Public Works of Canada...Parts of Original Lots...(15) and...(16) in Square...(158)...Also all of Original Lot...(17) in said Square...(158)..."

Source: Recorder of Deeds, Washington, D.C.

C. Date of Erection:

The building was begun in September 1906 and completed in 1909.

D. Building Permits:

The applications for the following building permits were filed by the architect, contractor or owner's agent and provide significant data:

No. 825, September 12, 1906

Permit to build dwelling

Owner: Clarence Moore

Architect: Bruce Price & de Sibour

Builder: George A. Fuller & Company

Address: 1748 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. (later 1746)

Location: Lot 17, Square 158

Estimated cost: \$200,000.

Filed with No. 825, September 12, 1906

Application for Projections beyond Building Line, No. 61267

Total of six balconies on 2nd and 3rd floors.

Steps to main entrance.

No. 3852, June 3, 1907

Permit to install electric passenger elevator and electric dumbwaiter

Owner: Clarence Moore

Mechanic: Otis Elevator Company

Estimated cost: \$5500, including dumbwaiter

No. 2322, December 19, 1908

Permit to erect marquise

Owner: Clarence Moore

Architect: Bruce Price & de Sibour

Contractor: George A. Fuller & Company

Dimensions: 7'-6" projection, 11'-0" width

Estimated cost: \$2500.

No. 586, July 28, 1909

Permit to Repair or Reconstruct

"Build cellar in rear yard, connected to rear area."

No. 3780, December 15, 1909

Permit to erect freight elevator (electric)

Owner: Mrs. Clarence Moore

Contractor: G. W. Forsberg

Use: Ashes, freight, etc.

Location: Rear of building
Dimensions: 5' x 4'
Estimated cost: \$1000.

No. 5116, June 8, 1915

Permit to Repair or Reconstruct Building

Owner: Mrs. Mabelle Wichfeld

Architect: J. H. de Sibour

Estimated cost: \$2420.

"Remodeling of interior of 3 rooms on third floor front and building scaffold on exterior of building for access to work."

No. 565, August, 24, 1917

Permit to Repair or Reconstruct Building

Owner: Mrs. Aksel Wichfeld

Architect: J. H. de Sibour

Contractor: D. K. Nichol

Estimated cost: \$15,000.

"It is proposed to construct a four story and basement addition on the west of present building, complete with heating, plumbing, and electric systems."

Source: Record Group 351, Records of the District of Columbia, Building Permits 1877-1949, Legislative and Natural Resources Branch, Civil Div., National Archives/Records Service, Washington, D. C.

E. Alterations and Additions:

A four story and basement addition containing small service rooms was built on the west elevation in 1917. Minor partitioning was added to the north drawing room and the west parlor on the [second] floor. Otherwise, there have been no major alterations to the main rooms on the ground and [second] floors.

F. Architect: J. H. de Sibour (Bruce Price & de Sibour, New York City)

See biography of J. H. de Sibour under 1700 Massachusetts Avenue.

G. Known Plans, Drawings, Elevations, etc.:

Front elevation. Ink on linen. Scale 1/4" = 1'

Filed with Permit No. 825, September 12, 1906

"Residence for Clarence Moore, Esq., Washington, D.C.

Bruce Price & de Sibour, Architects

1133 Broadway, New York

June 20, 1906"

(see reproduction)

Elevation, plan and section. Three blueprints. Scale 3/4" = 1'
Filed with Permit No. 2322, December 19, 1908
"Marquise - Residence for Clarence Moore, Esq.
Bruce Price & de Sibour, Architects.
1133 Broadway, New York
December 16, 1907. Revised January 29, 1908"
(see reproduction)

Plan of projections beyond building line. Ink on linen.
Filed with Permit No. 825, September 12, 1906

Plan of elevator. Blueprint. Scale 1/2" = 1'
Filed with Permit No. 3780, December 15, 1909
"Standard Electric Power Cellar Elevator
G. W. Foresberg, Elevator Builders and Erectors"

H. Important Old Views:

Exterior photograph showing marquise. "Residence for Clarence Moore, Esq."
Selections from the Work of J. H. de Sibour, Architect, Washington, D. C. Edward F. Gruver Co., Washington, D.C.: Bookbinder.
Private publication: property of Mr. Jay R. L. de Sibour, grandson of J. H. de Sibour. (see reproduction)

I. Residents:

1. City and telephone directories list the following tenants:

1909-1914	Clarence Moore
1915	Mrs. Clarence Moore
1916-1927	Aksel Wichfeld
1928-1943	Canadian Legation and Chancery
1944-1946	Canadian Embassy and Chancery
1947-1972	Canadian Chancery

2. Biographies of the residents:

Clarence Moore perished on the Titanic, which sank April 15, 1912 after colliding with an iceberg. Moore, who was born in Clarksburg, West Virginia March 1, 1865, had been interested in developing West Virginia coal mining, oil and timber properties. In 1890 he came to Washington where he became associated with W. B. Hibbs & Co., which became one of Washington's more successful banking and brokerage firms. Through Hibbs & Co., Moore engaged in many large real estate transactions.

Moore's first wife, Alice McLaughlin, daughter of Frank McLaughlin who was once the owner of the Philadelphia Times, died in 1897. In 1900 Moore married the former Mabelle Swift of

Chicago. Six years after their marriage, the Moores began building their residence at 1746 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.

A newspaper article at the time of the Titanic disaster reported:

Mr. Clarence Moore has been identified with smart Washington circles for the last fifteen years. He was a noted horseman and he exhibited both in this country and in Europe. He was for some years master of the hounds of the Chevy Chase Club. [1888-1911]. His residence, 1748 Massachusetts Avenue, [now 1746] completed about three years ago, is one of the handsomest in the city, and is a constant scene of hospitality. (The Washington Post, 4-16-12)

Moore left Washington on March 16, 1912 to vacation in England and to purchase foxhounds. A Night to Remember by Walter Lord mentions that "Clarence Moore of Washington...had been dog-shopping, but the 50 pairs of English foxhounds he bought for the Loudoun Hunt weren't making the trip." Clarence Moore was lost with 1513 others on the Titanic.

Sources: Walter Lord, A Night to Remember, New York: Holt, 1955, p. 13.

The Sunday Star, 4-28-12, 1:8.

The Washington Post, 4-16-12, 1:8.

Mabelle Swift Moore Wichfeld, Clarence Moore's second wife, was born March 28, 1878 and died February 1, 1933. Mabelle Swift was daughter of Edwin Carlton Swift of the Chicago meat packing family and therefore an heiress to the Swift fortune when her father died in 1901.

After her first husband's death, Mrs. Moore married Aksel C. P. Wichfeld in 1915. Aksel Wichfeld had come to the United States from his native Denmark in 1910. He engaged in banking and the operation of taxicab companies in New York City before being appointed as an attaché of the Danish Legation in 1916. At the time of his marriage to Mrs. Moore, Wichfeld was a guest of his uncle, the Danish Minister Constantin Brun, in Washington, D.C.

The Wichfelds maintained residences in New York, Paris, Washington, D.C., and Swiftmoor at Prides Crossing, Massachusetts. The Sunday Star, April 17, 1927, when reporting the sale of the Wichfeld's Washington residence to the Canadian government, indicated that "while the Wichfelds have lived abroad chiefly for some years, their home here in recent times was the scene of many fashionable gatherings of diplomatic and social circles."

Mr. and Mrs. Wichfeld were divorced in 1932. Mr. Wichfeld later married Josephine (Fifi) Widener, daughter of Joseph E. Widener, art collector and capitalist. Mrs. Wichfeld died in 1933 while visiting friends in England, leaving three sons: Jaspar, Clarence and Lloyd Moore.

Sources: The Sunday Star, 4-17-27, 3:1.

The Evening Star, 2-3-33, 3:1 (Mabelle Swift Moore Wichfeld, obituary).

The New York Times, 9-12-56, 37:2 (Aksel C. P. Wichfeld obituary).

The New York Times, 4-5-06, 9:3 (Edwin C. Swift, obituary).

The Washington Post, 2-4-33, 3:4 (Mabelle Swift Moore Wichfeld, obituary).

Canada's first diplomatic post in the United States was established when Vincent Massey presented his credentials as Minister Plenipotentiary to President Coolidge on February 18, 1927. Before this time, Canada's representation in America and other foreign countries was controlled by the British government. In 1943 the legation was raised to Embassy status, and Leighton McCarthy was appointed Ambassador.

On May 28, 1927 Canada bought the residence at 1746 Massachusetts Avenue from Mabelle Wichfeld for \$375,000. A portion of its furnishings were also acquired for an additional \$100,000.

The Assistant Chief Architect of the Department of Public Works of Canada reported to the Privy Council in 1927:

The whole building is of the very best and most expensive type of construction, and is at present in very excellent state of repair. The interior finish, while most elaborate and expensive, is in good taste, dignified and in keeping with the interior requirements of any embassy... [From] what could be ascertained, backed by the opinion of one of the prominent architects of Washington, the building is considered one of the best built residences in the City.

From 1927 until 1946, the building served as combined chancery and residence for the Minister and later the Ambassador. Since 1946, when the original Wichfeld furnishings were moved to the present embassy residence at 2825 Rock Creek Drive, it has been used solely for offices.

The heads of the mission since its inception have been:

The Honorable Vincent Massey	1927-1930
The Honorable W. D. Herridge	1931-1935
Sir Herbert Marler	1936-1939
The Honorable Loring Christie	1939-1941
The Honorable Leighton McCarthy	1941-1944
The Honorable L. B. Pearson	1944-1946
The Honorable H. H. Wrong	1946-1953
The Honorable A. D. P. Heeney	1953-1957
The Honorable Norman Robertson	1957-1958
The Honorable A. D. P. Heeney	1959-1962
The Honorable C. S. A. Ritchie	1962-1966
The Honorable A. E. Ritchie	1966-1970
The Honorable Marcel Cadieux	1970-

Source: The Canadian Embassy in Washington (pamphlet provided by the Canadian Embassy).

Minutes of a Meeting of the Privy Council, April 14, 1927. "Report from the Minister of Public Works concerning proposed Canadian Legation in Washington" (records of the Canadian Embassy).

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This detached residence has a Louis XV exterior with 16th, 17th and 18th century French and English interior details. [Floors as in HABS D.C. Catalog.]
2. Condition: well-maintained despite minor partitioning and service alterations.

B. Exterior Description:

1. Overall dimensions: The four-and-one-half-story-plus-base-ment structure is 79'-6" from sidewalk to roof ridge. The elevations measure 59'-0" along the three-bay north elevation (Massachusetts Avenue), 101'-0" along the composite four-bay east elevation (the last two bays broken back 4"), 58'-8" along the three-bay south elevation, and 101'-0" along the composite four-bay west elevation, which has an 18'-6" south bay followed by a 31'-5" service bay broken forward 11'-0" from the building wall.
2. Foundations: concrete footings and slab.
3. Wall construction: Above a granite base is a limestone torus water table, a rusticated ground floor, and a frieze and block string course below a pedestal which supports the upper walls of Roman brick separated between the third and fourth floors by a limestone Tuscan entablature with a bracket cornice and a block cap flush with the building wall. The second, third, and fourth-floor window and door architraves, breaking slightly forward, are set in a quoined limestone ground.
4. Structure: brick bearing walls, concrete floors, steel roofing members.
5. Mechanical: The building is heated by an oil-burning, hot air furnace. The Otis passenger elevator is wood-panelled. The "Standard Electric Power Cellar (freight) Elevator" is 5'-0" by 4'-0". The dumbwaiter and lighting are electric.
6. Porches, stoops, bulkheads, etc.: The north entrance has a 6'-6" wide stoop approached by four, 12'-0" wide, granite risers flanked by panelled limestone balustrades.

Flanking the head of the entrance and ground floor windows are limestone consoles with swag and guttae. The string course breaks forward at each pair of consoles to support limestone second floor balconies with vase balusters and panelled end stops.

The second floor window keystones are connected by limestone floral swags to flanking console brackets with pendants. The brackets support limestone third floor balconies with decorative cast iron railings each centered by a monogram bordered by rinceau and sprays. The basement is approached by a flight of concrete risers which descend into an areaway at the southeast corner of the building.

7. Chimneys: Visible from ground level are six limestone chimneys with Tuscan entablature caps (one each at the east and west walls, two at the front (north) mansard roof ridge and two at the south).
8. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The original double door and transom of plate glass and decorative cast iron with centered monograms has been replaced. The limestone, pulvinated oak leaf architrave has a scroll keystone with foliate sprays.
 - b. Windows: The ground, second and third floor windows and French doors are four lights wide. All are casement except for the ground and third floor bays where double-hung windows simulate casements. The first floor French doors have round-arched transoms and side lights; the second floor French doors have flat transoms. The ground floor has wrought iron, decorative bar grilles. The second floor has louvered shutters which fold into the architrave jamb.

The ground floor windows have recessed limestone architraves, fillet and block sills, and panelled keystones which interrupt the string course.

The first floor French doors have limestone, fascia and ogee architraves with acanthus leaf and scroll keystones and shell caps.

The second floor French doors have crossette limestone architraves of fascia and backband with scrolled keystones which interrupt the second floor entablature architrave.

The third floor windows have crossette limestone architraves of fascia and backband which interrupt the roof entablature architrave and frieze.

9. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: The slate mansard roof has limestone fractables, and metal, pulvinated ridge caps and flashing with built-up roofing behind.

- b. Cornice eaves: The limestone Tuscan entablature is capped at the north elevation by a raised panel balustrade with vase balusters centered over each bay, the end stops surmounted by a draped, limestone lamp.
- c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: Centered above each north bay is a double-hung, limestone dormer with side panels flanked by angular scrolls and capped by brackets which support a segmentally-arched pediment.

C. Interior Description:

1. Floor plans: On axis with the north central entrance is a ground floor vestibule, a five bay entrance hall and a stair hall. The entrance hall is flanked by an east library and two west reception rooms divided by a lavatory. The stair hall gives access to south service rooms, and a west elevator and service stair; the main stair ascends at the east, having a lavatory and east elevation entrance beneath its first landing.

South of the first floor stair hall is the south dining room (Ambassador's office) and a southwest breakfast room. To the west are the elevator and service rooms and stair. North of the stair hall the reception corridor is flanked by east and west parlors, all three opening into the drawing room running the width of the Massachusetts Avenue elevation. (See plan.)

South of the second floor living hall are three bedrooms and two baths. The service area is to the west and the major bedroom suites to the north flanking the hall. Ascending north within the master suite corridor is a secondary straight-run stair to the upper floors.

Arranged around the north to south central hall, the third floor has bedroom suites and a southeast play room. The fourth floor has additional bedrooms and servants' quarters.

2. Spaces:

Entrance vestibule:

- a. Flooring: black and white marble squares, laid diagonally, with black marble border.
- b. Baseboard: 9", tan and white-veined black marble with fascia cap.
- c. Walls: plaster to simulate limestone. Raised panels have rosette corner indentations.
- d. Cornice: cyma, dentil, cavetto, talon and ogee.

- e. Ceiling: There is a single raised panel with rosette corner indentations and cyma surround.
- f. Doorways and doors: The side-lighted, double door to the entrance hall has decorative cast iron grilles of rosettes and leaf bars over plate glass with a centered lion mask in patera.
- g. Hardware: brass door handles.
- h. Lighting: There are single, black-enamelled coach lights with concave glass panes at the east and west walls.

Entrance hall: (See photographs.)

- a. Flooring: white and black marble squares, laid diagonally, with black marble border.
- b. Baseboard: 9", tan and white-veined black marble with fascia cap.
- c. Walls: plaster to simulate limestone. The east and west walls are divided into three bays of raised panels with fascia and cyma mouldings flanked by opposed double door bays, each bay separated by fluted pilasters on plinths having limestone composite capitals.
- d. Cornice: The full entablature has a fascia and cyma (plaster) architrave, a (limestone) frieze of anthemion and palmette separated by cornucopia and rosettes, with a (plaster) talon cap, and an enriched corona (wood) cornice. (See detail photograph.)
- e. Ceiling: 11'-9" high. Wood beams frame cavetto and talon coffers centered with dropped patera.
- f. Doorways and doors: Each leaf of the opposed double door has three panels with a linen fold panel at the bottom, a central panel of urn with rinceau, and an upper panel of dolphins, male figures, masks, griffins and horse head masks in rinceau.
- g. Hardware: silver, male head, connecting-bar terminals with leaf and tail handles.
- h. Lighting: There are four, two-light, alabaster sconces each with a satyr holding bronze, paired cornucopia with opaque glass light bowl terminals. The single, plaster, hanging bowl lamp has allegorical scenes in relief, a gilded metal rim and handles, and an alabaster pineapple pendant. (See detail photograph.)

Library: (wood. Tudor manner.)

- a. Flooring: basket weave parquetry.
- b. Baseboard: 8", with bead cap.
- c. Walls: There are seven rows of flat panels with cyma mouldings. Flanking the north window, the south mantle and between either west wall door are 2'-10" high cabinets below built-in bookshelves with a bound, oak leaf roll architrave.
- d. Cornice: gouge frieze and talon.
- e. Ceiling: 11'-9" high, plaster painted white. Geometric panels within floral ribs.
- f. Doorways and doors: At either end of the west wall are double doors to the entrance hall (8'-6" high) with five flat panels and a double fascia with cyma architrave.
- g. Hardware: Each door leaf has an 8 1/2" wide by 4" high by 1 1/2" deep brass rim lock having a lion mask escutcheon and fleur-de-lis panel with an acanthus "barbell" door knob.
- h. Lighting: There are six, two-light, mirror-backed brass sconces, and two, five-light, brass chandeliers.
- i. Heating: The south wall chimney mantel (8'-1" wide by 6'-6" high) has a limestone firebox surround with a cyma, bead and cavetto architrave on plinths, and six quatrefoil frieze panels with decorative carvings. A wood bolection moulding surrounds the whole and is capped by a cavetto shelf. The overmantel has two rows of linen fold panels.

Reception room: (painted white. Late Georgian manner.)

- a. Flooring: carpeted.
- b. Baseboard: 7", wood with bead cap.
- c. Dado: raised panels with cyma moulding.
- d. Chairrail: 2'-11" high, wood with bead, fascia and roll.
- e. Walls: plaster. The southeast door interrupts one of the large flush panels which have pulvinated leaf mouldings. The windows and entrance hall door, in addition, are flanked by narrow, raised panels.
- f. Cornice: There is a metope and triglyph frieze with decorative guttae, and volute modillions above the triglyph and between a talon moulding, and an astragal and talon cornice.

- g. Ceiling: 11'-9" high, plaster with decorative center oval of swags, fan spandrels.
- h. Doorways and doors: The natural wood double door to the entrance hall and the single south wall door both have three rows of paired panels and a double fascia, talon, and strapwork and leaf architrave.
- i. Hardware: The brass rim locks, 6 1/2" wide by 3 1/2" high by 1 1/2" deep, each have a panel with a bead moulding and oval fan knob.
- j. Heating: The south wall chimney has a grey-veined white marble hearth and a grey and white-veined black marble firebox surround. The mantel (6'-9" wide by 5'-1" high) has a cavetto and bead architrave surround, reed and flute pilasters, a reed and flute frieze broken forward as a lion mask over either pilaster, and a cyma and cavetto shelf. There is a raised overmantel panel within a leaf fascia and pulvinated gilloche frame.

Stair hall: (see photographs)

- a. Flooring: black and white marble squares, laid diagonally, with black marble border.
 - b. Baseboard: 9", tan and white-veined black marble with fascia cap.
 - c. Walls: The plaster walls simulate limestone and have raised panels with fascia and cyma mouldings. Flat-panelled composite pilasters flank the stairwell openings.
 - d. Cornice: The full entablature has a fascia and cyma (plaster) architrave, a (limestone) frieze of anthemion and palmette separated by cornucopia and rosettes, with a (plaster) talon cap, and an enriched corona (wood) cornice.
 - e. Ceiling: 11'-9" high. Wood beams frame cavetto and talon coffers centered with dropped patters.
 - f. Doorways and doors: Flanking the west wall chimney are single, three-panelled doors with a linen fold panel at the bottom, a central panel of urn with rinceau, and an upper panel of dolphins, male figures, masks, griffins and horse head masks in rinceau.
- Under the stair landing at the east wall is a single door of plate glass and decorative cast iron.
- g. Hardware: silver, male head, connecting-bar terminals with leaf and tail handles.

- h. Lighting: There is a single, plaster hanging bowl lamp with allegorical scenes in relief, gilded metal rim and handles and alabaster pineapple pendant. Satyr sconces light the stair landings.
- i. Heating: The west wall chimney has a tan marble hearth and firebox surround. The plaster, limestone-simulated mantel (7'-9" wide by 6'-5" high) has three-quarter-engaged round plinths with decorative urn dados below beaded, spiral composite columns supporting 18" high rinceau brackets with scroll soffits. There is a bundled reed, mask and floriated fascia architrave, a frieze of palmette and anthemion separated by cornucopia and rosettes, and a dentil, egg and dart, corona, astragal and cyma shelf. The flush-panelled overmantel hood has raised cyma mouldings.
- j. Stair: The first four risers of this dog-leg stair are on a graduated convex curve; the whole ascends sixteen risers east to the first landing, and eleven additional risers west to the first floor. The closed stringer simulates limestone and supports 6" high by 6'-0" wide tan marble risers and treads. The banister has cast and wrought iron monogram escutcheons, leaf and tendril panels and a moulded oak handrail. (See photograph.)

The second flight ascends twelve risers east to the first landing, eight risers north to the second and twelve risers west to the second floor. Wood beams frame a cavetto and talon coffered ceiling.

First floor stair hall: (See photographs.)

- a. Flooring: herringbone parquetry, carpeted.
- b. Baseboard: 5 1/2", wood with scotia cap.
- c. Wainscot: (described by section; wood. See photograph.)
- (1.) linen fold panels and pedestal stiles.
 - (2.) rinceau-panelled chairrail, 3'-9" high, between mask blocks at stiles.
 - (3.) urn, mask, griffin and floral rinceau panels in cavetto and guilloche mouldings between alternating male and female term stiles ending at 6'-0" height. (See detail photograph.)
 - (4.) rinceau mask rail panels between mask blocks at stiles.
 - (5.) at 8'-0" height, cavetto and cyma cornice.

- d. Walls: The simulated limestone plaster walls continue behind the wainscot. The west chimney wall breaks forward 1'-3".
- e. Cornice: floral rinceau panels between escutcheon blocks; cyma cornice.
- f. Ceiling: 15'-0" high, plaster painted white. The coffers have rounded corners and rib bosses.
- g. Doorways and doors: There are 9'-5" high double doors to the south dining room (Ambassador's office), the north drawing room, and the east and west parlors. Each leaf has four rows of panels with paired linen fold panels at the bottom followed by a griffin lock rail panel, paired medallion and trophy rinceau panels, and paired medallion rinceau panels at the top. The architrave is similar to the wainscot stiles except for the substitution of composite, fern leaf pilasters above the term stiles. The rinceau frieze over the door has mask block terminals, a bead and cyma cornice, and a broken segmental pediment with scroll terminals and rinceau tympanum.

Flanking the west wall chimney mantel are single doors, each leaf similar to the wainscot and capped by a broken scroll pediment with rinceau mask tympanums.

- h. Heating: The west wall chimney has a green marble hearth and firebox. The carved wooden chimney piece (7'-4" wide by 6'-3" high by 3'-1" deep) has plinths which support single elaborately carved, composite columns and semi-engaged columns, banded at mid-shaft, which in turn support griffin-and-rinceau beams projecting from the wall and terminating in masks. The entablature has a fascia architrave, an allegorical frieze in high relief, and a layered mantel shelf.

The 3'-7" high overmantel is one panel in depth. Three arabesque-faced panels with guilloche and foliate mouldings are separated by male and female term stiles, and terminated by decorated engaged three-quarter composite columns. The rinceau frieze is broken by mask block stiles and capped by a layered cornice.

Dining Room: (Ambassador's office. In the manner of Belton House dining room in Grantham, England, designed by William Stanton in 1685, with carvings attributed to Grinling Gibbons. See photograph.)

- a. Flooring: herringbone parquetry.
- b. Baseboard: 9 1/2", wood with cyma and bead cap.
- c. Dado: raised panels of burlled walnut veneer in a cyma moulding.

- d. Chairrail: 3'-2" high, wood with fascia and bead.
- e. Walls: raised panels of burl'd walnut in a cyma moulding. At the room corners, over the west doors and flanking the door to the hall are high relief wood carvings.
- f. Cornice: The cornice of corona and cyma courses between coves is terminated by talon.
- g. Ceiling: 15'-0" high, plaster painted white. The central panel has tobacco leaf pulvination, a cove, and a ribbon roll moulding. Each corner is indented by flower and fruit, pulvinated roundels, connected by floriate border panels.
- h. Doorways and doors: The three panel double door to the hall, 9'-5" high, has a bolection architrave, pulvinated frieze over the door and segmental pediment. Flanking the west wall chimney are single doors, 7'-5" high, with a fascia, bead and cyma architrave, pulvinated frieze over the door and segmental pediment.
- i. Hardware: Each door leaf has an 8 1/2" wide by 4" high by 1 1/2" deep brass rim lock with a cherub panel, capped by a dolphin bolt lock, and a decorative oval knob.
- j. Lighting: There are eight, three-light, escutcheon-backed, silver-plated sconces and a ten-light, baroque urn, arm and tassel, silver-plated chandelier.
- k. Heating: The west wall wood chimney mantel (9'-0" wide by 6'-0" high) has a white and grey marble bolection fire-box surround. The panelled pilasters support consoles which flank a swag and trophy frieze, and an acanthus, talon and cyma shelf. The overmantel has a raised panel capped and draped with carved pheasant, flowers and oak leaves.

Breakfast room: (wood, painted. Secretary's office.)

- a. Flooring: carpeted.
- b. Baseboard: 6", with cyma and bead cap.
- c. Dado: flat panels.
- d. Chairrail: 3'-5" high, fascia.
- e. Walls: three rows of flat panels.
- f. Cornice: cavetto and stepped fascia.
- g. Ceiling: 15'-0" high, plaster painted white. The shallow dome within its flower and fruit pulvinated frame

has floral wreath and spray spandrels, and is centered by a round, flower and fruit fixture rosette.

- h. Doorways and doors: There are two, two-panelled doors, one each to the dining room and the northwest antehall.
- i. Hardware: brass, star-patterned, bulbous door knobs.
- j. Heating: The east wall, white marble chimney mantel (6'-6" wide by 4'-10" high) has pilasters with inlaid yellow marble fluting. The pilasters support a rosette and swag frieze interrupted at the center and over either pilaster by urn panels.

East parlor: (wood painted cream)

- a. Flooring: herringbone parquetry.
- b. Baseboard: 8", green-veined black marble with wood bead cap.
- c. Dado: raised panels with cyma moulding.
- d. Chairrail: The 3'-2" high, talon, fascia and cyma rail returns to the wall 2" before the door and window architraves.
- e. Walls: raised panels with cyma moulding. The south chimney wall breaks forward 3 1/2" with three-quarter-round astragal corners. Resting on the chairrail and flanking the mantle are semicircular-arched shell niches with crossette, astragal and talon architraves and raised panels over either arch.
- f. Cornice: cyma, talon, corona, astragal and cyma.
- g. Ceiling: 15'-0" high, plaster painted white.
- h. Doorways and doors: The double doors to the hall and drawing room have raised panels and a crossette architrave of astragal, fascia, talon, astragal and cyma mouldings. There is an acanthus bolection frieze over either door and an acanthus cavetto, corona, astragal and cyma cornice.
- i. Windows: The floor to cornice architraves, similar to the doorways, have recesses for draperies.
- j. Hardware: brass strapwork escutcheons for mortise locks.
- k. Heating: The south wall chimney mantel (5'-7" wide by 4'-9" high) has a green-veined marble bolection surround within a wood talon frame. The overmantel panel has a high relief, palm leaf cap draped over floral cornucopia,

and flanked by floral swags terminated by paired pheasants with floral pendants linked by ribbon and tassel.

West parlor: (wood, painted cream; low office partition. Late 18th century English manner.)

- a. Flooring: herringbone parquetry (covered in black asphalt tiles.)
- b. Baseboard: 7", with bead cap.
- c. Dado: single raised panels in cyma moulding.
- d. Chairrail: 3' 1/2" high, fascia and roll.
- e. Walls: The walls are divided into three sections with narrow panels of rosette guilloche at the bottom, flat panels in astragal, fascia and cyma, rosette-indented frames at the center, and plain panels at the top. The south chimney wall is broken forward 14".
- f. Cornice: The full entablature has a fascia and cyma architrave, a plain frieze, and a cavetto, bead, bolection, corona and cyma cornice.
- g. Ceiling: 15'-0" high, plaster painted white. At the center is an oval sunburst with a laurel surround, bordered at the cornice by a decorative running dog frieze.
- h. Doorways and doors: Pairs of double doors, one each to the drawing room and hall have two, rosette-cornered raised panels in a fascia and cyma moulding. Over each door is a crossette rinceau panel.
- i. Windows: The fascia and cyma architraves have recesses for draperies.
- j. Hardware: Each door leaf has a brass rocaille rim lock, 7" wide by 3" high by 1" deep, with a decorative oval knob.
- k. Heating: The south wall chimney hearth is covered by carpeting and the firebox is closed. The wood mantel (7'-0" wide by 4'-9 1/2" high) has a plain architrave surround, flanked by reeded panels, which support a horizontally fluted frieze interrupted by a central urn panel and broken forward over either reeded panel. Roll mouldings form the shelf. An overmantel mirror, within an astragal moulding, is capped by a crossette rinceau panel and flanked by vertical rosette panels.

Drawing room: (oak. Jacobean manner.)

- a. Flooring: black asphalt tiles (modern).

- b. Baseboard: 6", with cyma cap.
- c. Dado: Flat square panels are set within "L"-shaped panels.
- d. Chairrail: 5'-0" high, ogee.
- e. Walls: Flat square panels are set within "L"-shaped panels. The west chimney wall is broken forward 2'-7".
- f. Cornice: talon, alternating acanthus modillions and patera, cyma.
- g. Ceiling: 15'-0" high, plaster painted white. Various shaped geometric panels are framed by decorative floral ribs.
- h. Doorways and doors: There are three sets of double doors, one each to the east and west parlors and central hall, with paired linen fold bottom panels, a plain lock rail panel and an upper rectangle within "L"-shaped panels. The acanthus bolection architrave is capped by a plain pulvinated frieze and an ovolo, corona and cyma cornice.
- i. Windows: The four bays, three on Massachusetts Avenue and one at the east, have 14'-0" high acanthus bolection architraves.
- j. Hardware: Each door leaf has a brass key excutcheon, 8" wide by 3 1/2 " high, having a decorative central rosette within a cartouche, and an oval acanthus knob. Each window has a brass extension bolt lock with a brass lever and rosette knob.
- k. Heating: The west wall chimney hearth is covered by asphalt tile and the firebox is closed. The wood mantel (10'-2" wide by 5'-10" high) has paired, fluted Ionic columns on strapwork drums which support guilloche consoles flanking a panelled frieze. The frieze is divided into three sections by paired strapwork consoles. The shelf is an ovolo.

The overmantel 4'-0" high, is divided vertically into three crossette panels by alternating male and female terms, the central section sculpted to form a round-arched niche with floral spandrels. The terms support consoles which flank a panelled frieze below a dentil, ovolo, corona and cyma cornice.

D. Site:

- 1. Setting and orientation: The building faces north on a lot measuring 82'-4" on Massachusetts Avenue, 194'-7" on the east, 62'-7" on the southeast (public alley), 63'-0" on the southwest,

and 162'-0" on the west.

2. Enclosures: Terminated at the north by limestone consoles, the lot is surrounded at the east, south and west by a limestone-capped, brick garden wall. Flanking the building and supported by limestone pylons are 16'-0" high, decorative cast and wrought iron double gates with segmental arches and escutcheon caps.
3. Outbuildings: none.
4. Walks: The north entrance is approached by a semicircular concrete drive with granite curbing. The south garden area has been paved for parking and service.
5. Landscaping: There are hemlock, azalea, boxwood and elm plantings at the north. A rectangular planted area separates the parking from the south side of the building.

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This document, made from records donated December 1973 to the Historic American Buildings Survey by the Commission of Fine Arts, represents studies of prime, typical, diversified and sumptuous architecture erected primarily between the years 1890 and 1930, when American society and architecture were greatly influenced by the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. These studies, organized originally to be adapted to HABS format, were first published in 1973 as Massachusetts Avenue Architecture, Vol. 1, issued by the Commission of Fine Arts, 708 Jackson Place, N.W., Washington, D. C., Charles H. Atherton, Secretary; Donald B. Myer, Asst. Secretary; Jeffrey R. Carson, Architectural Historian; Lynda L. Smith, Historian, and J. L. Sibley Jennings, Jr., Architect. Photographs were made for the Commission by Jack E. Boucher, Linwood, New Jersey; J. Alexander, Wheaton, Maryland; and the Commission of Fine Arts Staff. Donated material was coordinated for HABS documentation in 1978 by Lucy Pope Wheeler, HABS Writer/Editor.

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